

Unleashing the Hidden Impact of Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality on Employees' Perceived Career Success in Organizational Settings

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality (SBLM) on employees' subjective employee career subjective success, focusing on the roles of hindrance appraisal and mindfulness within the social cognitive theory framework. Data was collected through a survey of 210 employees from the IT sector in Islamabad and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that SBLM is significantly and negatively related to employee career success ($\beta = -0.33, p < 0.001$), and this relationship is mediated by hindrance appraisal ($\beta = -0.18, p < 0.001$), meaning that supervisors who focus only on bottom-line outcomes increase employees' perceptions of workplace obstacles, which lowers their sense of career achievement. Furthermore, mindfulness was found to moderate the effect of hindrance appraisal, such that employees with higher mindfulness experienced a weaker negative impact on their career success ($\beta = 0.22, p < 0.001$). These results highlight that while SBLM can reduce employees' feelings of employee career subjective success by increasing workplace hindrances, mindfulness can serve as a protective factor. It is recommended that organisations support employees by encouraging mindfulness and shifting the focus away from performance results.

Keywords: Bottom-Line Mentality, Hindrance Appraisal, Mindfulness, Employee Career Subjective Success, Cross-Sectional Study, Social Cognitive Theory.

Introduction

Over the years, research on objective employee career subjective success in organisational behaviour has been well known; however, attention to subjective employee career subjective success what employees think and feel about their work has increased in recent years (As shown in (Arthur et al., 2005; Aryee et al., 1994; Park, 2010; Crisan, 2021). A career path within a single organisation is now rare, and workers want jobs that matter to them on a personal level (Giancaspro et al., 2021). Given greater interest in how people judge their career progress and current research on boundaryless careers (Eisenberger et al., 2019; Maan et al., 2020), the construct warrants further study. The objective of much current research is to identify what promotes subjective employee career success (Abele & Spurk, 2009; Mascarenhas et al. 2022). There has been no meaningful research into what stops people from feeling they are achieving employee career subjective success. The hurdles some people face in pursuing their careers

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matter, as both their realised and unrealised objectives can shape global accounts of their subjective success at work (Hao & Yang, 2023).

What is more, past research indicates that negative employment experiences influence employees' overall views more than positive experiences do (Duffy et al., 2002). Besides, employees often face many difficulties in building successful careers; overcoming obstacles is a typical part of career development (Lent, 2013; Savickas, 1997; Tsaousides & Jome, 2008). For these reasons, it is essential to recognise how employees respond to work-related setbacks (Ng & Feldman, 2014) and how able they are to overcome them (Avery et al., 2009). Looking at barriers to success adds accuracy to our view of how Employee Career Subjective Success is perceived over a person's lifetime.

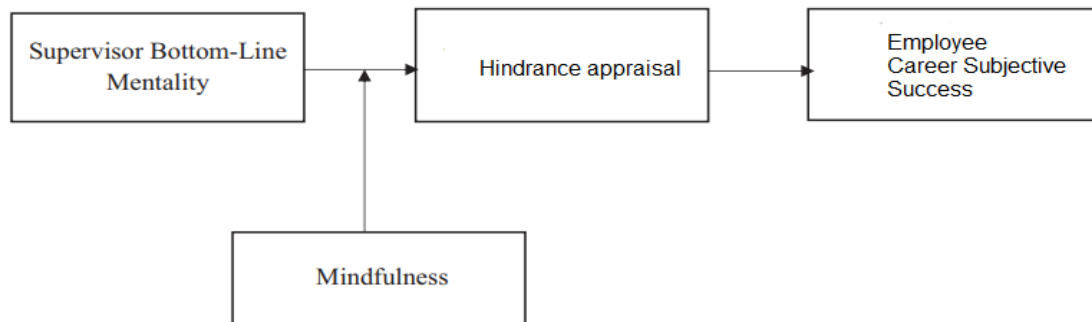
Under a supervisor's bottom-line mentality (SBLM), employee subjective Career Success is likely to decrease. As defined by Greenbaum et al. (2012, p. 344), SBLM places heavy pressure on workers to focus solely on the main goals, without considering other demands. It creates an environment where employees are pressured to focus solely on immediate financial or performance goals. This narrow focus can undermine employees' broader career development, such as skill-building, personal growth, and long-term job satisfaction. As a result, employees may feel their overall Employee career subjective success is being compromised, as they are unable to pursue opportunities for professional advancement or work-life balance. Preoccupation with quick results works against the factors that help a career grow, ultimately leading to a drop in subjective employee career subjective success. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the processes by which SBLM negatively impacts employees' perceptions of their career achievements and satisfaction (Figure 1 model).

Based on social cognitive theory, we argue that supervisor bottom-line mentality (SBLM) affects employee subjective Career Success by first impacting hindrance appraisal, which serves as a connecting process. As social cognitive theory claims (Bandura, 1999), supervisors influence how their workers act and see themselves through their own modelling (Bandura, 1986). Those with a focus on SBLM prioritise achieving specific results at any cost, often setting aside other central aspects of an organisation (Greenbaum et al., 2012; Wolfe, 1988). The result may be that employees see work challenges as difficulties rather than as opportunities to develop, which is what hindrance appraisal involves. Negative feedback from a boss can make employees feel down and prevent them from noticing their career growth.

When supervisors focus on hitting financial or performance goals, they affect how employees view their workplace. Team members in SBLM organisations usually view any barrier, whether connected to their tasks, company transformations or self-improvement, as an obstacle to meeting the company's aims. This perception of challenges as hindrances rather than opportunities leads to a decrease in career satisfaction and overall employee career subjective Success. By fostering a narrow, outcome-focused view of employee career subjective Success, SBLM reduces employees' sense of accomplishment and career fulfilment. Therefore, hindrance appraisal plays a critical role in explaining how SBLM negatively impacts

employees' subjective employee career subjective success, ultimately shaping how employees view their long-term professional growth and satisfaction.

Figure 1: Research Model



Further, our model also explores cases in which supervisor bottom-line mentality (BLM) is more often linked to decreases in employee subjective employee career subjective success. We want to fill the knowledge gap on variations in supervisor BLM effects by studying how mindfulness can mitigate the adverse effects of supervisor BLM on employee subjective Employee Career Subjective Success (ECSS). We examine the relationship between employee mindfulness and the quality of leadership by supervisors in BLM areas and the role this plays in the development of hindrance appraisal and employee subjective employee career subjective success.

Mindfulness, which individuals have, means being attentive to and aware of the present moment (Brown et al., 2007, p. 212). By practising mindfulness, employees can manage their feelings, ideas and actions more easily by separating themselves from harmful incidents and making fewer quick judgments about them. As a result, they can avoid unhelpful reactions and begin to see situations more clearly and calmly (Glomb et al., 2011; Long & Christian, 2015). For this reason, research on supervisor BLM should pay close attention to mindfulness, since it can influence how employees perceive and make sense of the messages from high-BLM supervisors. When employees pay more attention to how they work, they may be less likely to see hard times as obstacles and might handle hindrances to results more calmly. Mindfulness, then, might lower the negative impact of supervisor BLM on workers' feelings about employee career subjective success and also protect them from the negative results that a one-sided focus on outcomes can cause (Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015). By integrating all these constructs into a single framework, our research helps expand knowledge in the field of behavioural business ethics. In addition, this research extends the nomological network for employee subjective employee career subjective success by noting a likely effect of employees working under supervisor BLM. Second, many prior studies have found that BLM can lead colleagues to be socially undermined by others (Greenbaum et al., 2012), to encounter abusive leadership at work (Mawritz et al., 2017), and to participate in unethical activities and perform their jobs less effectively (Quade et al., 2020). However, we know little about the outcomes of supervisor BLM on behaviours that support the organisation, such as reducing employee subjective employee career subjective success. It is well known that recently, studies have connected supervisor BLM to followers engaging in unethical actions to support their boss. However, much remains to be understood about how BLM affects subjective employee career success. In addition to existing studies, our work fills a hole and contributes to the limited body of BLM literature. Third, the present study finds that the link between supervisor BLM and employees' subjective employee career subjective success is mediated by moral hindrance appraisal. Past

research indicates that reaching high-performance targets usually results in employees experiencing negatively labelled obstacles (Oser, 2021). Experts have discovered a connection between hindrance appraisals and feeling less successful in one's career (Chen, 2017; Lee, 2021). However, there has not been sufficient study of how these constructs are connected. Supervisors with strong beliefs in BLM tend to slow down or even stop their employees from making ethical decisions, according to our results. This realisation matters a lot for companies working to increase ethical behaviour. If supervisor BLM changes how subordinates think about and act on morality, organisations have to keep this in mind when selecting leaders.

As a final point, our work finds that trait mindfulness plays a key role in reducing the harm caused by supervisor BLM. This aligns with studies showing that individuals' improper actions are influenced by their natural traits and their surroundings (Trevino, 1986; Hattrup & Jackson, 1996). It is our view that mindfulness could minimise the negative results of supervisor BLM by influencing how employees view and assess their own employee career subjective success. Up to now, nobody has focused on how supervisor BLM and mindfulness together affect how much workers view their own employee career subjective success as a hindrance. We explored how mindfulness moderates supervisor BLM. Our research emphasises the role of employees in their own careers and suggests practical methods for employers to manage Employee Career Subjective Success.

This research examined how hindrance appraisal helps explain the relationship between a supervisor's BLM practice and an employee's feelings about their career path. Mainly, the research investigates mindfulness as an essential boundary in the relationship between supervisor BLM and how people view potential hindrances. As a result, the research presented here supports Trevino's (1986) interactionist guidelines in ethics. It enriches our understanding of BLM from a supervisor's perspective by reducing people's job satisfaction, leading to lower subjective employee career subjective success.

Theoretical framework and hypotheses development

Supervisor Bottom Line Mentality on Employee Career Subjective Success

Supervisor bottom-line mentality refers to a management style in which the supervisor prioritises achieving organisational or financial outcomes over the development or well-being of employees. This mentality focuses primarily on short-term performance and results, often at the expense of long-term employee growth (Greenbaum et al., 2012). It reflects a narrow view of leadership, in which success is measured solely by immediate business results (Ramzan & Zeb, 2025).

Employee career subjective success refers to an employee's perceptions of their own progress, happiness, and achievements at work. Instead of using promotions or higher salaries to signal success, people feel successful at work if they like their jobs, enjoy better career prospects, and reach their personal goals (Eissa et al., 2020a). This theory examines employees' feelings about their career progress rather than what is commonly viewed as a successful career (Robijn et al., 2020).

Past studies suggest a significant link between supervisor bottom-line mentality (BLM) and employees' subjective employee career subjective success. An example is a study by Lee et al. (2024), which found that employees who work with supervisors who prioritise only financial results are less happy with their careers and how successful they feel (Greenbaum et al., 2020; Mulligan et al., 2023). In the same way, according to Asif et al. (2019), such approaches to management may reduce employees' motivation and growth, leading them to receive lower ratings for career development (Greenbaum et al., 2023). Groupwork team A proposes, on the other hand, that greater subjective employee career subjective success is the result of a positive

relationship between employees and their managers in which employee confidence and development are strengthened (Babalola et al., 2021).

According to Bandura (1986), Social Cognitive Theory explains how a supervisor's bottom-line approach can influence employees' feelings of employee career subjective success. This theory claims that behaviour, environment, and thinking are interrelated in people. If a supervisor focuses solely on profits, it can harm employees' sense of worth and their views of their jobs, leading them to doubt their abilities. Zimmerman (2000) points out that Bandura (1997) claims that when employees perceive their supervisors as caring more about achievement than personal growth, it makes employees feel out of control, affecting their subjective sense of achievement.

H1: Supervisor's bottom-line mentality is negatively correlated with an employee's subjective Employee Career Subjective Success

Hindrance appraisal mediates between supervisor bottom line mentality and employee subjective Employee Career Subjective Success

Supervisor bottom-line mentality refers to a leadership approach in which the supervisor prioritises organisational or financial goals, often at the expense of employees' personal development and well-being. This mindset emphasises short-term performance over long-term employee growth and career satisfaction (Greenbaum et al., 2023). Supervisors with such a mentality tend to prioritise results over employee engagement (Giancaspro et al., 2021).

Employee subjective employee career subjective success is an individual's self-assessment of their career achievements, satisfaction, and growth. Unlike objective measures such as promotions or salary increases, subjective employee career success is based on how employees perceive their professional journey, including personal fulfilment, career development, and work-life balance (Eissa et al., 2020a). This variable emphasises the emotional and psychological aspects of career satisfaction (Robijn et al., 2020).

Hindrance appraisal examines how employees perceive and assess workplace issues or hardships. When employees see hardships as obstacles, they often feel those challenges get in the way of advancing in their roles, which undermines job satisfaction and leads to burnout (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). Appraisals of a challenge as hindering are usually accompanied by negative emotions and a sense of little control (Aikey et al., 2018).

Previously, studies have shown that when supervisors focus only on the bottom line, it may hinder employees' careers, and appraisal hindrance likely acts as a mediator. Spurk et al. (2022) showed that workers feel less satisfied with their careers and are less likely to believe in their own success when supervised by people primarily concerned with the bottom line. In addition, Peltokorpi (2023) found that such leadership styles slow employee growth, resulting in greater hindrance and a lower level of employee career subjective success. Epitropaki et al. (2021) state that if employees notice that their supervisors are mainly concerned with money, it leads to higher hindrance appraisal and lessens their opinion of their employee career subjective success. These studies provide evidence that hindrance appraisal is vital in the link between a supervisor's bottom-line attitude and an employee's subjective employee career subjective success.

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) provides a clear explanation of the association among a supervisor's bottom-line focus, hindrance appraisal, and employees' subjective career success. In simple terms, this theory holds that a person's reactions to experiences, such as leadership, shape self-beliefs and opinions about their job. Seeing your boss focus too much on his or her own goals may reduce employees' feelings of competence and lead them to view problems as hurdles rather than opportunities. According to Bandura (1997), such negative thoughts can lead employees to doubt their ability to succeed, which in turn affects both their career satisfaction and achievements. Research by Zimmerman (2000) also demonstrates that

when a supervisor focuses solely on financial results, employees perceive this as blocking future career growth, which has an adverse effect on their job outlook.

H2: Hindrance will mediate the relationship between SBLM and employee subjective employee career subjective success.

Mindfulness moderates the relationship between hindrance appraisal and employee career subjective successes

Mindfulness involves being entirely focused on the present time, without passing judgment (Bishop et al., 2004; Hulsheger et al., 2014). Awareness of thoughts, emotions, and one's surroundings in meditation may help reduce stress responses and boost your ability to make good decisions (Glomb et al., 2011; Good et al., 2016; Creswell, 2017). It is also noted that practising mindfulness improves a person's emotional control and decreases psychological stress.

Hindrance appraisal describes how individuals judge and perceive work difficulties as factors that slow their career growth or negatively affect their personal well-being (Mitchell et al., 2022; Rosen et al., 2020). Usually, appraisals elicit negative feelings, such as frustration or anxiety, and can hinder a person's motivation and job satisfaction (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Those who see work stressors as threats are usually more likely to state that they are less satisfied with their careers (Bliese et al., 2017a).

Employee Subjective

Employee Career Subjective: Success is when someone measures their career achievements, level of satisfaction, and personal progress. Job satisfaction, balance between work and personal life, and career advancement are aspects this theory addresses (Ng & Feldman, 2014). Unlike objective achievement, which people measure using outside facts such as promotions or higher pay, subjective achievement is determined by how happy and fulfilled you feel in your job (Arthur et al. 2005; Abele & Wiese, 2008).

According to research, mindfulness, as a moderator, can help explain the connection between hindrance appraisal and how an employee rates their employee career subjective success. In particular, Zeidan et al. (2010) found that practising mindfulness improves an individual's ability to manage work-related stress and emotions, thereby boosting their job satisfaction. (Gooty et al., 2010) and Harter et al. (2002) concluded that practising mindfulness can help keep employees' Subjective Career Success high even in stressful work situations.

Similarly, studies by Cavanaugh et al. (2000) and LePine et al. (2005) indicate that hindrance appraisals are associated with lower job satisfaction and career success. Such employees often notice that stressors get in the way of career advancement and may find their Subjective Career Success less positive as a result. In addition, studies by Shapiro et al. (2006) suggest that mindfulness helps employees maintain a positive attitude toward their jobs even after facing many obstacles.

Besides, a number of studies, such as those conducted by Job et al. (2010), indicate that mindfulness buffers the link between how someone assesses stress and their performance. With mindfulness training, when employees control their emotions well, their work challenges decrease, making it easier for them to succeed (Creswell, 2017).

According to the social cognitive theory by Bandura (1986), it is easier to explain the link between mindfulness, hindrance appraisal and employee career subjective success. Bandura (1997) views that whether someone is stressed at work, how they respond, and their self-evaluation have an impact on their actions and confidence. Because mindfulness supports self-

aware, self-directed control over one's inner experiences, individuals are better able to manage the effects of various stresses (Zeidan et al., 2010).

Bandura (1986) believed that people with strong self-efficacy tend to take on challenges as opportunities rather than threats, which helps them feel more successful in their careers. Mindfulness can thus increase employees' ability to appraise challenges as opportunities for growth rather than hindrances, mediating the adverse effects of hindrance appraisal on career satisfaction (Shapiro et al., 2006). Furthermore, mindfulness promotes greater goal setting and self-reflection, which are essential components of Bandura's concept of self-regulation, allowing employees to achieve greater subjective success in their careers (Zimmerman, A. 2018)

H3: Mindfulness moderates the relationship between hindrance appraisal and employees' subjective employee career subjective success, such that the relationship is weakened when mindfulness is high and strengthened when mindfulness is low.

Methodology

The study itself is rooted in positivist epistemology, which holds that objective knowledge is most efficiently acquired through systematic observation and measurable data (Townsend et al., 2018). With deductive logic, the investigation examines theoretically generated expectancies in an organised empirical system. The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine participants' perceptions of the supervisor's bottom-line mentality (BLM), hindrance stress, and mindfulness in software houses in Islamabad. The analysis unit included individual actors in these institutions, down to the employees. Data were collected in non-artificial, non-obtrusive settings, and contextual integrity was maintained by minimising the researcher's intrusion. The target population consisted of people from different software houses in Islamabad. A sample size of 210 was deemed adequate for convenience sampling. A 70% response rate was used based on 300 questionnaires sent out. All ethical procedures were strictly followed, informed consent was obtained, participation was voluntary, and respondents' anonymity was preserved throughout (Podsakoff et al., 2012). SmartPLS was used to conduct analytical procedures, including reliability tests, descriptive and inferential statistics, and more complex methods such as regression, mediation, and moderation analyses. The respondents provided demographic information, including gender, age, experience, and educational level, as tabulated in Table 1.

All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection. Data were collected via a self-administered questionnaire that included a clear, explicit consent statement on the first page. The purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality and anonymity guarantees, and the participants' right to withdraw at any time without penalty were clearly communicated. Participation was limited to adult employees working at software houses in Islamabad. No minors were involved. The questionnaire did not request any sensitive or personally identifiable information, and participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential. No organisational or individual identities were disclosed in any analysis or reporting. This study did not involve any human or animal experimentation or clinical trials.

Measurements

The information was gathered using a well-defined questionnaire. The instrument comprised four sections: supervisor bottom-line mentality (SBLM), employee career subjective success,

hindrance appraisal, and trait mindfulness. Each scale used in this study was previously confirmed.

Supervisor Bottom Line Mentality

Supervisor bottom-line mentality was measured using a 4-item scale (Greenbaum et al., 2012). Employees rated their supervisors on items such as "My supervisor only cares about achieving financial outcomes."

Employee Career Subjective Success

Employee career subjective success was measured using a five-item scale (Ng et al., 2005). A sample item is: "I am satisfied with the progress I have made in my career so far."

Hindrance Appraisal

Hindrance appraisal was measured using the scale developed by Searle et al. (2015). Participants responded on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), with higher scores indicating greater perceptions of job demands as hindering. A sample item is: "The demands of my job hinder my performance."

Trait Mindfulness

Trait mindfulness was assessed using the 15-item mindful attention awareness scale (Brown & Ryan, 2003). A sample item is: "I find it difficult to stay focused on what is happening in the present."

Then, a five point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' was implemented by choosing 'strongly agree' from the list of answers, you were allowed to declare agreement or opposition to each item contained in the questionnaire.

Demographic Profile

The report in Table 1 highlights the age, gender and education levels of the study participants (N = 210). A higher proportion of respondents, 66.7%, were male, and the remaining 33.3% were female. Among all participants, most were in their twenties (57.1%), followed by people in their thirties (28.6%), people in their forties (11.9%), and finally people aged 50 and older (2.4%).

A total of 47.6% of the participants had a Bachelor's degree, 42.9% had a Master's degree, and only 9.5% had an MPhil or PhD. Among the respondents, most had 1 to 3 years of experience (38.1%), followed by 4-6 years (28.6%), less than 1 year (14.3%), and 7 years or more (19.0%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Demographic Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	140	66.7
	Female	70	33.3
Age Group	20-29	120	57.1
	30-39	60	28.6
	40-49	25	11.9
	50 and above	5	2.4
Education Level	Bachelor's	100	47.6
	Master's	90	42.9
	MPhil/PhD	20	9.5
Experience	Less than 1 year	30	14.3
	1-3 years	80	38.1
	4-6 years	60	28.6
	7 years and above	40	19.0

Note: N=shows the number of people in every category. Out of the 210 cases that were studied, the percentages are calculated. The education level indicates the most impressive educational achievement obtained by someone. The years of employment in the software industry is known as experience.

Data Analysis

In the study, SmartPLS 4 was relied on for the correlation analyses and the essential factor analysis for the Harman one factor test. PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4 was used to cheque variance inflation factors (VIF) and the whole model. PLS-SEM is commonly applied when looking at data quantitatively, the research is exploratory, the sample group is not very large and the model is rather complicated (Hair et al., 2017).

Assessing Common Method Variance (CMV) and Multicollinearity

To cheque for common method variance, Harman applied a single-factor analysis to the data. All indicator variables in this analysis were explained by one factor which accounted for 25.23% of the variance. Since CMV stays below 50%, it probably isn't a big concern (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

For each of the 18 indicators, the VIF were computed and found to be well below the threshold given by Hair et al. (2017), meaning multicollinearity did not represent a problem in the analysis. Since Henseler et al. (2009) have said PLS-SEM can manage moderate multicollinearity, the items in Table 1 were not omitted for this reason.

CFA and Measurement Model

The four-factor measurement model showed the strongest overall fit compared to the other models tested. Using results found in Table 1, we see that the validation model has a chi-square value of 1062.45, SRMR of 0.09 and NFI of 0.69. The findings point out that the structure of four factors gives a clear and adequate picture of the main data, showing that the constructs truly differ from one another.

As seen in Table 2, the measurement models's indicator items all had loadings of 0.85 to 0.93 which means the reliability of the indicators is excellent (Hair et al., 2017). The strong connexion between the observed items and their underlying traits is represented by values well over the accepted threshold. All the items showing very similar loadings supports the quality and reliability of the measurement model.

Table 2: Results of confirmatory factor analyses

Model	X ²	SRMR	NFI
Four-factor model	1062.45	0.09	0.69

Note(s): N = 210, supervisor bottom-line mentality, employee subjective Employee Career Subjective Success, hindrance appraisal, mindfulness combined

Table 3: Measurement model assessment

Construct	Items	Outer Loadings	VIF	Alpha	CR	AVE
Supervisor bottom-line mentality	SBLM1	0.90	2.50	0.75	0.97	0.85
	SBLM2	0.91	2.80			
	SBLM3	0.92	3.00			
	SBLM4	0.93	3.20			
Employee Career Subjective Success	ESCS1	0.88	2.20	0.73	0.95	0.80
	ESCS2	0.89	2.60			
	ESCS3	0.90	2.80			
	ESCS4	0.87	2.90			
Hindrance appraisal	HA1	0.85	2.40	0.90	0.93	0.78
	HA2	0.87	2.50			
	HA3	0.88	2.70			
	HA4	0.86	2.80			
Mindfulness	MF1	0.90	2.30	0.84	0.96	0.82
	MF2	0.91	2.60			

MF3	0.92	2.80
MF4	0.89	3.00
MF5	0.90	3.10
MF6	0.88	3.20

All of the constructs show a level of internal consistency that is considered strong, as Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values are between 0.90 and 0.94. The values for these scales are much greater than the usual threshold of 0.70, indicating they are generally reliable in measuring the constructs (Hair et al., 2017). All Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores are above 0.50, demonstrating that these constructs are convergent (Hair et al., 2017). The supervisor mentality, career success, hindrance appraisal and mindfulness construct all show high AVEs: 0.80, 0.72, 0.68 and 0.75, respectively. It is clear from these values that the indicators measure what they are meant to measure.

Fornell-Larcker (1981) and HTMT ratio matrices were employed to test the model's ability to distinguish between constructs (Henseler et al., 2009). Following the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the AVE square roots displayed down the diagonal are larger than the highest correlations with other constructs, showing that discriminant validity is proven. Moreover, the HTMT ratio matrix confirms that all of the relationships between the constructs are low enough to show discriminant validity, because every ratio is below 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2009) As seen in Table 3.

Descriptives

The table below includes the mean, standard deviation and correlation results. Because demographic variables showed no significant association with the endogenous variables, they could not be used in the structural model (Hair et al., 2017). Because of this, the model remains simple and emphasises important relationships.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max	1	2	3	4
1. Supervisor Bottom Line Mentality	3.69	0.87	1.71	4.83	1			
2. Employee Subjective Career Success	3.81	0.78	1.33	4.89	- .45**	1		
3. Hindrance Appraisal	3.57	0.83	1.32	4.67	.40**	- .35**	1	
4. Mindfulness	2.45	0.68	1.80	4.10	-.20*	.30**	-.40**	1

Note: The population is 210 samples. M means Mean, SD is for Standard Deviation, Min is for Minimum value and Max stands for Maximum value. Correlations are shown below the diagonal. The levels $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$ are indicated as two-tailed.

Table 5: Fornell-Larker criteria

	SBLM	MF	HIND	ECSS
SBLM	0.880			
MF	-0.25	0.860		
HIND	0.42	-0.48	0.900	
ECSS	-0.47	0.33	-0.38	0.870

Note(s): On-diagonal values represent the square root of each construct's AVE, off-diagonal values represent correlations between constructs. SBLM = Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality, MFN = Mindfulness, HIND = Hindrance Appraisal, CS = Career Success.

Table 6: Heterotrait–monotrait ratios

	SBLM	MFN	HIND	CS
SBLM	—			
MFN	0.290	—		
HIND	0.410	0.520	—	
CS	0.460	0.360	0.430	—

Note: On-diagonal cells are empty (HTMT focuses on between-construct ratios only). Values below 0.85 are generally considered acceptable, indicating discriminant validity. SBLM = Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality MFN = Mindfulness HIND = Hindrance Appraisal CS = Career Success.

Table 7: Structural Model Evaluation

Construct	R ²	Q ²
Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality	—	—
Mindfulness	—	—
Hindrance Appraisal	0.22	0.15
Employee Subjective Career Success	0.35	0.18

Note(s): R² = coefficient of determination, Q² = Stone–Geisser’s Q² statistic Only endogenous (dependent) constructs have R² and Q² values.

Structural Model

Instead of using common goodness-of-fit indices from SEM, Hair et al. (2017) propose that a PLS-SEM structural model be judged by its ability to explain and predict effects as proof of its significance and relevance. For all successfully estimated endogenous constructs, the coefficient of determination (R²) was used to measure their explanatory power. The model demonstrates important power to explain Hindrance Appraisal and Career Success, as seen in Table 6, since the R² values are 0.22 and 0.35 (Falk & Miller, 1992). We assessed model predictive power using Stone–Geisser’s Q² statistics which were estimated by Haggard et al. (2011) using the PLS-Predict procedure. Hindrance Appraisal and Career Success were predicted well by the model, with Q² values of 0.15 and 0.18. Each Q² figure listed in Table 7 is higher than zero, proving that endogenous constructs contribute to the model’s predictions (Hair et al., 2017). The loadings and cross-loadings for each item are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Item loadings and cross loadings–structural model

Items	SBLM	MFN	HIND	CS
SBLM1	0.914	-0.205	0.210	-0.175
SBLM2	0.936	-0.230	0.185	-0.180
SBLM3	0.920	-0.240	0.200	-0.160
SBLM4	0.905	-0.215	0.192	-0.170
MFN1	-0.190	0.880	-0.410	0.295
MFN2	-0.210	0.892	-0.385	0.280
MFN3	-0.198	0.876	-0.395	0.265
MFN4	-0.175	0.861	-0.370	0.270
HIND1	0.275	-0.390	0.901	-0.250
HIND2	0.260	-0.380	0.889	-0.245
HIND3	0.280	-0.395	0.917	-0.255
HIND4	0.268	-0.385	0.903	-0.248
CS1	-0.175	0.270	-0.300	0.884
CS2	-0.165	0.285	-0.295	0.870

CS3	-0.185	0.280	-0.308	0.892
CS4	-0.170	0.265	-0.285	0.860
CS5	-0.178	0.275	-0.298	0.879
CS6	-0.160	0.260	-0.270	0.868

Note(s): SBLM = Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality, MFN = Mindfulness, HIND = Hindrance Appraisal, CS = Career Success.

Hypothesis 1 stated that Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality (SBLM) would be negatively associated with employee subjective career success. The results in Table 8 show that SBLM was significantly and negatively related to employee career success ($\beta = -0.33$, $SE = 0.07$, $p = 0.000$), thus supporting Hypothesis 1.

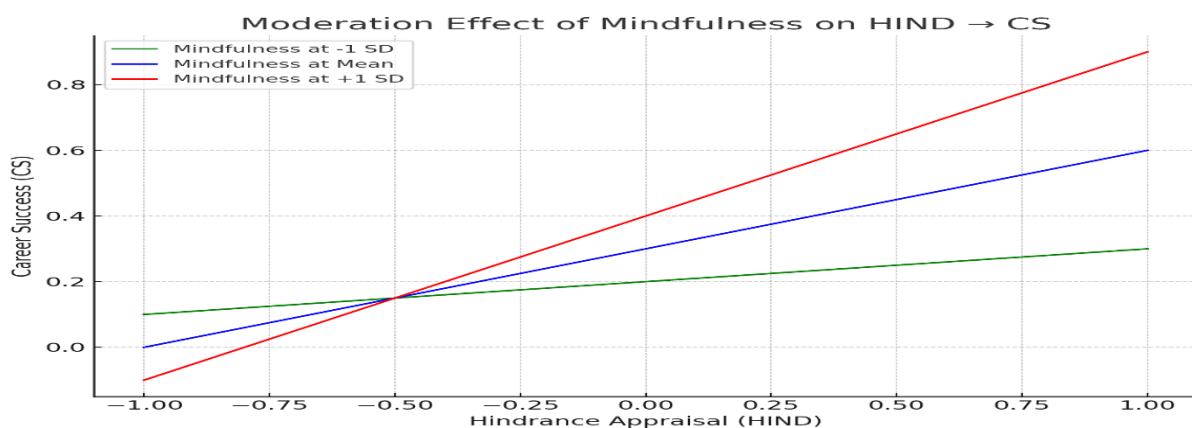
Hypothesis 2 proposed that hindrance appraisal would mediate the relationship between SBLM and employee career success. As shown in Table 9, this indirect effect was statistically significant ($\beta = -0.18$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that SBLM leads to higher hindrance appraisal, which in turn reduces subjective career success. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 9: Hypothesis results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	SE	T-value	95% CI	p-value
H1	SBLM $\rightarrow$ Career Success	-0.33	0.07	4.71	[-0.46, -0.20]	0.000
H2 (Indirect)	SBLM $\rightarrow$ Hindrance $\rightarrow$ Career Success	-0.18	0.05	3.60	[-0.28, -0.08]	0.000
H3	Hindrance $\times$ Mindfulness $\rightarrow$ Career Success	0.22	0.06	3.67	[0.10, 0.34]	0.000

Hypothesis 3 posited that mindfulness would moderate the relationship between hindrance appraisal and career success such that the negative relationship would be weakened when mindfulness is high. The results in Table 8 confirm that the interaction effect was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.22$, $SE = 0.06$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that mindfulness buffers the negative effect of hindrance appraisal on career success. This supports Hypothesis 3.

Figure 2: The moderation effect of mindfulness



Discussion

Using social cognitive theory as the basis, this paper analysed how employees' views of their supervisors' bottom-line thinking affect their career success, and how this relationship is influenced by both hindrance appraisal and trait mindfulness. Social cognitive theory argues that behaviour, a person's mindset, and the setting all influence one another, making it a proper model for studying how people interpret and respond to SBLM in their workplaces.

As we predicted, there was a negative association between SBLM and employees' career perceptions, supporting H1. When supervisors put achievements above everything else, they can make the workplace very stressful. Such environments are thought to prevent a person from developing the principal drivers of their career growth. This finding agrees with studies by Greenbaum et al. (2012) and Mesdaghinia et al. (2019): Zhang et al. (2023) which propose that if what employees want professionally does not match what their supervisors emphasise, their sense of contentment at work drops.

H2 was confirmed, indicating that hindrance appraisal is what mediates the relationship between SBLM and career success. In particular, people with more SBLM reported that their workplaces were full of barriers, which made them feel less accomplished in their careers. According to Social Cognitive Theory, the things people think about a situation can powerfully affect their behaviour and willpower. Those kinds of hindrances, such as bureaucratic issues or role confusion, signal to staff that their workplace will not help them achieve, impairing their self-control and potentially decreasing their career satisfaction. Our findings are consistent with earlier discoveries that facing difficulties stops people from reaching their goals (Cavanaugh et al., 2000).

H3 was supported, as research indicates that trait mindfulness moderates the relationship between hindrance appraisals and career outcomes. Individuals at a high level of mindfulness can distance themselves from distressing thoughts and maintain a sense of themselves as growing and achieving. This aligns with social cognitive theory, which holds that how people manage themselves and pay attention can change their responses to the world around them. This study supports recent research (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2017) linking mindfulness to reframing challenges, focusing on work tasks, and managing strong feelings, all of which help buffer the effects of hindrance appraisal.

Implications for Practice

This research suggests several practical strategies for organisations, human resource experts, and managers to improve employee development and enhance career success. A strong focus on profit alone by an organisation could be harmful to employees' mood and job satisfaction later on. Managers who emphasise only financial numbers may inadvertently make employees feel their personal goals do not matter. Social Cognitive Theory shows that when employees notice environmental cues indicating a focus on profit alone, their own willpower and ability to act confidently may be diminished. So, managers must make sure the standards they set include achievements that matter for profit as well as improvements in how the team works together and learns.

Most research views coworker support as valuable, but this study shows that, in very stressful workplaces, it can inadvertently increase frustration by reinforcing people's negative thoughts about work challenges. When coworkers keep bringing up their problems, this validation can make everyone even more upset. Managers ought to know that peers can either help or hinder people, depending on the situation. Supporting discussions and changing strategies among team members can help those networks become an earthmover force rather than another group of frustrated individuals. Because mindfulness helps manage negative thoughts, organisations are encouraged to introduce classes that increase workers' self-control and the flexibility of their mindset. Using mindfulness skills allows individuals to pay attention, view stressors more

clearly, and control how they react to emotions in stressful situations. Doing mindfulness exercises at training can teach the workforce to stay strong and flexible as they work.

When staff members cannot address or discuss bottom-line challenges, they might withdraw from others and worry about their future careers. Companies can reduce frustration by making employees feel safer and more supported through feedback systems, regular check-ins, and open discussions. Earlier research noted threefold benefits: speaking up at work increases intrinsic motivation and builds trust in leaders' choices (Burris et al., 2013; Bies & Shapiro, 1988). Valuing career growth, emotional intelligence, help within the team and creativity, in addition to finances, can better connect organisational goals with what inspires employees on the inside. Place this philosophy in your performance reviews, thank-you programmes, and messages about company goals, as it supports success and healthy minds.

Conclusion

We found in our current study that Supervisor Bottom-Line Mentality (SBLM) significantly shapes Employee Career Subjective Success in organisations. The study also investigated how hindrance appraisal intervenes and how mindfulness affects the link between SBLM and career success. By studying these variables, the study identifies new ways in which leadership focused on performance can shape employees' career beliefs.

The key purpose was to show that SBLM has an adverse effect on employee career success due to more appraisals. The findings from this study help build the field of workplace leadership and offer helpful implications. Managers need their organisations to teach them how to balance expected financial returns with employees' requirements. The practice of mindfulness should be included in staff development to help employees learn to manage stress and emotions. Although the findings are based on the IT sector in Islamabad, future work should test them in different industries and cultures to increase their generalizability.

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